

THE
JACOBITE
CLUB

Bessie Smith Photo

January 1909



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2013

<http://archive.org/details/jacobiteclub00jaco>

THE JACOBITE CLUB

THE JACOBITE CLUB

MDCCCCIX

JACOBITE CLUB SONG

JACOBITE CLUB SONG

Now let the fire burn
Under the shining urn,
Let Brother Folsom draw nigh,
Mingle the strong and sweet;
He knows the portions meet
Better than you do or I.

Chorus:

Then let each Jacobite,
Filling his glass to-night,
Drink to our Jacky, our Country,
and Club;
Where was there ever met
Just such another set
As this, our Jacobite Club?

Here 's to our Country proud!
Though dark rebellion's cloud
Hangs o'er the beautiful land,

We have sent forth the men
Who will remove the stain
Though they should fall where they
stand.

Chorus:

.

Now for a loving cup
Hot and strong, fill it up!
Be not a drop of it spilt;
And let each brother here
With a voice loud and clear
Pledge to the "Club that Jack built"!

THE JACOBITE CLUB

THE JACOBITE CLUB

THE Jacobite Club—most delightful and enduring of sodalities!—originated from the suggestion of brother John C. Ropes, who, in the early winter after our graduation, invited a number of select members of our Class to meet at his father's house, 92 Beacon St., Boston, and proposed that, to keep up the good fellowship which had characterized our Class and made our College-life so peculiarly happy, they should take supper or dinner together, regularly, once a month.

The proposition was heartily responded to, and at a second meeting, on December 1, 1857, the plan was adopted, and Ropes and Bartlett were commissioned to draw up a Constitution, which they did upon December 10. The first regular meeting occurred at Bartlett's, 95 Beacon St., when

the Constitution was adopted, some revision being provided for, and officers were elected; viz.:—

President, Storrow; Vice-President, J. C. Ropes; Secretary, Bartlett; Treasurer, Sowdon; Commissary, Dyer.

At half-past nine the company sat down to supper. The names of these Immortals—the first group of assembled Jacobites!—should be recorded here: they were Bartlett, Dyer, Higginson, Lincoln, Morse, F. C. Ropes, J. C. Ropes, Stackpole, Storrow, Wells, and Willard. Little could they realize what a long series of delightful symposiums was to follow this original banquet!

At the second regular meeting of the Club, held at the “Ben Franklin,” the question was considered of the name by which it should be called. That which at once took the fancy of the brothers was suggested by Wells,—“The Club that Jack built,”—and it was adopted by acclamation. Although this name was soon super-

seded, in common use, by that of "The Jacobite Club," it was never abrogated or lost, but remained the constitutional title. The later and more celebrated appellation does not seem to have been ever formally adopted. No mention of any action in regard to it exists in our Records. But, as early as December, 1859, it appears incidentally in the report of the Secretary, Perkins, as evidently the title customarily employed. It is believed to have originated in the off-hand suggestion of Stackpole, when the practical inconvenience of the longer name was mooted. The half-concealed pun which it contains upon the occasional nick-name of our illustrious Founder doubtless gave it an appropriateness which at once commanded respect and observance.

At the April meeting of 1860, a handsome brass urn was presented to the Club by brothers Perkins, J. C. Ropes, and Stackpole, becoming, it is believed, the only piece of common property which it has possessed.

One year later, at the meeting of April, 1861, it was brought in, having been surreptitiously embellished by parties unknown with a silver plate, on which was engraved our original name, "The Club that Jack built." This invaluable relic, long the invariable accompaniment of our feasts, seems to have unaccountably disappeared. Perhaps it perished in a fire which destroyed the "Ben Franklin" in January or February, 1871. If it still reposes in the plate chest of any unscrupulous brother, it ought to be recovered by summary process and its future destination distinctly and legally determined.

Of the meetings of the first two years of our existence no records, if any were made, have been preserved. In 1859, it coming to the consciousness of the Club that its highly interesting history was fading into oblivion, brother J. C. Ropes, who, then and life-long, kept a diary, was requested to prepare an account from his private memoranda, which he did, and it is

inscribed in the first volume of our Records. Thenceforth, for many years, the Secretaries' Reports, with many invaluable papers embodied in them, were pretty systematically—and very entertainingly—made and preserved. Only in our latest period has this commendable custom, with our singing and perhaps some other lively features of our earlier reunions, lapsed into an unfortunate desuetude. Yet occasional literary scintillæ have continued to enliven recent Jacobite festivals. One of the latest pleasant outbreaks of the old spirit, very interesting to the present writer, marked delightfully his advent to the scriptural term of Man's Earthly Estate. It began with a characteristically cordial epistle from the Club, conveying its congratulations on his 70th anniversary, and concluded with a poem (of course, most graceful!) written by brother Long, in response to his own inadequate but feeling reply to the Club's kind letter, which, with some account of the birthday festivities, and his

remarks thereat, in prose and verse, had been published in a special edition of the *Jacobite Monthly*. All these proceedings and papers were reprinted in a handsome pamphlet, which it is understood that brother Haven was especially interested to provide.

While a few members, as brothers Ropes and Bartlett, early entertained the Club at their homes, most of our suppers, for many years, took place at some down-town tavern, notably the "Ben Franklin," already named, an ancient and London-like hostelry, at first in Morton Place, out of Milk Street, and later in Central Court, kept by one William Park. This was always the favorite meeting-place for the Jacobites, who gathered there innumerable times, always returning to it with relief and satisfaction after any divagations to perhaps more elegant but less home-like houses of entertainment. A harmless distinction early grew up among the brothers,—those who were responsible for the tavern-sup-

pers being called "pot-house" members, which term was later applied to those who entertained the others at an hotel or club. At first, economy was a necessity, and an imported leg of Southdown mutton was the only luxury permitted by our sumptuary law. Each "pot-house" member paid his scot, in cash, after supper, and the calculation of the amount due, conducted by a committee who retired to a corner for the purpose, was called "declaring the dividend."

Ten or a dozen was about the average number of Jacobites present at meetings in the early days, as indeed it has been in later ones. From time to time, there were added to the original Eleven other classmates who became better known than they had been in college, or who earned distinction in the War or in professional life, or who came back within clubbable distance, through return for study at Cambridge. Two or three, only, ever voluntarily dropped out, but several removed too far from the Hub

for frequent attendance. A number, who lived at a distance, were always treated as outlying members, or Jacobites in posse, and were fraternally welcomed at dinners when they came to Boston. Thus, Starr was entertained in 1860, and again, when at home from the front in 1864. The present writer lately found, among his college scraps, the notes of a song composed for the latter occasion, entitled "The Soldier's Return, or the Starr that won't set," which he is pleased to find, from the Secretary's (Lincoln's) Report, was sung on this occasion:—"startled the echoes," says Solomon,—perhaps with its dissonances! When Dwight, a full member and former President, came home on furlough, not long before his lamented death at the hands of guerillas, the Club, after dinner at Bartlett's, with much empressement and ceremony and a speech by Sowdon, presented to him a sword. In his response, accepting the gift, he feelingly expressed his appreciation of the testimonial, and assured the

brothers that while, as a cavalry officer, he could not employ in action an infantry sword, he should ever cherish it as a precious memento!

After supper, there was plenty of singing, with Bartlett usually at the piano and Folsom as chorister; and besides the Secretary's Report, which was expected to be elaborate, other papers began to be read, which presently took shape in the "Jacobite Monthly," for which editors were thereafter regularly chosen at the annual elections. It would be impossible to convey an adequate idea of the overflowing wit and humor which characterized the contributions to this wholly unique periodical! Among many others, the brightest and funniest were apt to come from Bartlett, Lincoln, Folsom, Stackpole, and Wells. The Inaugural and Farewell addresses of the successive presidents were impressive in the highest degree. Poems were written, sometimes long ones, reporting meetings or on current events; and songs, one of

which, among others by Bartlett, written in 1862, became the Jacobite Club Song, par excellence:—

“Now let the fire burn
Under the shining Urn,
Let brother Folsom draw nigh!” etc.

It went to a delightful tune, which he also composed. Stackpole, Folsom, Lincoln and others produced lively lyrics, and the present writer was occasionally permitted to offer some effusion of his sober muse.

Especially, even in our earliest days, there was abundant good and serious talk, and the period, just before the War, was one peculiarly fitted to evoke it. It has always—of course the more as we have grown older—been quite as characteristic of Jacobite dinners as the fun which reigned in our youthful period. Almost every public question and many abstract and general ones were earnestly debated. During the whole existence of the Club, there has been

the utmost informality in our relations; conviviality was never forced; and while there was certainly freedom, there was never bacchanalian excess.

John Ropes, distinctly the leading man of our Class and of our Club, was always treated with profuse deference and honor as the originator of the Sodality. After a while, as a reference to him in Bartlett's song, just spoken of, indicates, —

“Here 's to our noble Prex,
Founder and Pontifex,” —

all these titles used to be applied to him, especially the last; and more often, as the guardian of the conscience of the Club, and of propriety of expression and behavior in members, he was called our “Lord Chancellor.”

As years went on, the Sodality took on more and more of the settled characteristics of a club, and as means increased, the suppers became dinners, and at length were

given by the brothers in alphabetical order, as hosts of the rest, at their houses or clubs. Of the latter, the Union and Somerset (at the last of which our annual Class Dinners have also long been given) were the most frequent scenes of our meetings.

Thesemonthlyreunionshavecontinued in an almost literally unbroken sequence, eight months in each year, for over fifty years; and have contributed, more than could be estimated, to the wonderful unity and good-fellowship in which the Jacobites have lived. We have called ourselves "brothers," but the mutual tie became something almost warmer and stronger than a natural fraternity. As French had said of our Class in an early poem (in 1855, before the Institute of 1776, J. M. being Orator):—

"This is a brotherhood closer than kin."

I doubt if a group of men ever maintained such delightful relations of easy intimacy and mutual confidence and affection, for

any comparable period. Certainly, there has been no other such instance in the history of the College. Most fortunately, for a good many years after the War (in which two of our best men, Dwight and Perkins, were killed) death spared us. But Willard, from the effects of service in the army, died in 1870; Folsom in 1882; Dyer in 1887, and Smith, one of our most delightful companions, in 1888. Storrow, our first President, died in 1897; and our truly honored and beloved Pontifex was taken away — far too early for all his friends! — in 1899. Stackpole, Wells and Gorham not long ago departed. Within this latest twelve-month, the Jacobite Club has indeed begun to seem nearing, like all things earthly, its inevitable end! The still recent deaths of Lincoln and Haven, within a year of each other, and the infirmities and sorrows of some among the little remaining group, render it doubtful if our regular monthly dinners will much longer continue. Esto! Yet Higginson has just had a dinner in

Boston (November, 1908), with Bartlett, Long and Sowdon as his guests, and Bartlett has given his invitation for the regular night in December, at which time he expects all these, and Morse, just returned from Europe. So it is to be hoped that the half dozen or so who survive may still sit down together, at least occasionally, as throughout the pleasant days of our happy half-century.

The regular dinners of the Club, which originally and for long were on Wednesday evenings, have been given for very many years on Friday evenings, on which other engagements are less numerous. Scores of times, thirteen have sat down at them. The success in life, the prosperity and social prominence of the Jacobites through all these years, have been a commentary on an idle superstition! Often different evenings have been chosen when more convenient, as, for example, when a brother from abroad was in Boston and could not remain for the regular night (the second Friday of each

month from October to May). Sometimes, as for me, a few years ago, two Jacobites have been given on succeeding evenings.

Jacobite dinners have often occurred elsewhere than in Boston. In the early days, the brothers went out to Dyer's and to Walcott's, in Cambridge, and to Hale's in South Boston, and repeatedly, through the years, to Haven's at Beverly, to Storrow's in Brookline, and to Morse's in Jamaica Plain. Several times they have been the guests of Higginson in New York. When I was in the Divinity School, the Club accepted, with the greatest complacency, a pretty meagre repast at my rooms in Divinity Avenue in Cambridge. Some years ago, several went out to Buffalo and dined with Gorham. (I was not able to go, as I was just about to sail for Europe.) On the eve of Sarah's marriage, I gave a Jacobite in Philadelphia, at the Hotel Bellevue, and had half a dozen guests, including Gorham, who came from Buffalo for the dinner and the wedding.

The house of any member where the brethren have met has always been held to be the Jacobite Club-house in that locality. The Club has had, therefore, numerous palaces in Boston and villas in the suburbs. When Lucretia was married at my cottage, "Magavelda," at York Harbor, Maine, and John Ropes gave her wedding breakfast at his "villa Tranquille," to which, as to the marriage service, all Jacobites were, of course, invited and a good number came, the Jacobite Monthly duly reported the occasion as a meeting of the Sodality at its Club-house in York Harbor, brother Ropes being host, and an accessory part of the entertainment being a wedding at brother May's cottage, near by. (Brother Haven always declared this the most delightful of all wedding-occasions!)

It will be a very great pity if an adequate chronicle shall not be made of the Jacobite Club, with a selection from its papers, of which many still exist. Possibly Bartlett, who could do it most fitly, may be induced

to prepare one. But I fear that this highly unique history, about which clings such an aroma of love and kindness and good cheer, must presently fade into oblivion, "quia caret vate sacro," —except so far as this meagre sketch by one who was often, during the years, yet far too seldom, present at Jacobite dinners, may partly serve to keep it in memory.

J. M.

Philadelphia, November, 1908

SONGS

THE MYSTIC J. C. R.

Music : "The Bonny Blue Flag."

There are three mystic letters
Strange to the common mind,
Though in them every virtue
True Jacobites will find :
In sorrow or in joyful days,
At home or when afar,
His eye grows brighter as it greets
The mystic J. C. R.

Chorus :

C. R.—C. R. The mystic J. C. R.
We 'll fill us up a brimming cup
And drink to J. C. R.

J. stands for Jacky,
Codman is meant by C.
And R. for Ropes, our pontifex,
Revered by all U. P.

Now put them all together,
You 'll find the mighty name,
John Codman Ropes, the Jacobite,
Our favored child of fame.

Chorus :

C. R.—C. R. The mystic J. C. R.
We 'll fill us up another cup
And drink to J. C. R.

J. also stands for Jacobite,
C. for the Club we boast,
R. for the Rum we 're drinking here
(Grant that I get the most).
Thus comes the Jacobite Club Rum,
Known to no common bar,
For Jacobites alone may sip
The nectrous J. C. R.

Chorus:

C. R.—C. R. The mystic J. C. R.
We'll sing its praises while we drink
The nectrous J. C. R.

Again these mystic letters
Much more would signify:—
The Jacobite Club Records,
Where thoughts that never die
Are found embalmed, for here have writ
Under their brightest star
The grave and gayest Jacobites
A page of J. C. R.

Chorus:

C. R.—C. R. The mystic J. C. R.
He 'll be a better, wiser man
Who reads the J. C. R.

To minds un-Jacobitical
These letters seem to stand
For Johnson's Chancery Reports
Of Knickerbocker land.
For us they mark the J. C. Rum,
A nobler thing by far,
The J. C. Records—J. C. Ropes—
All live in J. C. R.

Chorus:

C. R.—C.R. Our mystic J. C. R.
Pray that we see and drink and hear
Forever J. C. R.

1863

F. B.

For Harvard's fame we lift the glass,
This health to her be given;
One deeper draught, 't is for the Class—
The men of 'Fifty-seven.

Whether we serve, or wear the crown,
These days shall glad us still;
And joys of old, re-lived, shall drown
The while life's every ill.

The songs together sung of yore,
Shall ne'er our lips depart,
Till of us all there beat no more
In tune a single heart.

The old loves aye shall stronger be,
Grown richer still, like wine,
Till sparkles most the latest e'e
For days of auld lang syne.

July, 1860

J. D. L.

Alas! youth shall wane like the sand
 in the glass;
E'en as we are singing its swift mo-
 ments pass;
Our brows shall be wrinkled, our step
 shall be slow,
But say, shall our hearts be less faith-
 ful than now?

No! Fair Alma Mater! around thee
 for aye
Fond memories cluster that know not
 decay;
And the last grey-haired brother that
 lingereth here
'Fifty-seven and Harvard united shall
 cheer!

July, 1860

J. M.

MEMBERS OF
THE JACOBITE CLUB

MEMBERS OF THE JACOBITE CLUB

Francis Bartlett

* Stanton Blake

John Langdon Dearborn

* Howard Dwight

* Ezra Dyer

* George McKean Folsom

* Francis Ormond French

* Joseph Augustus Hale

* Franklin Haven

James Jackson Higginson

* Charles Paine Horton

* Solomon Lincoln

John Davis Long

Joseph May

Robert McNeil Morse

* Samuel Newell

* James Amory Perkins

* Francis Codman Ropes

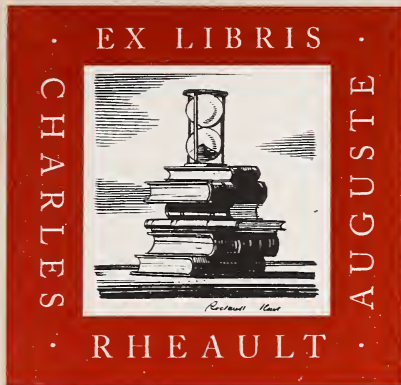
* John Codman Ropes

* Robert Dixon Smith

Arthur John Clark Sowdon
* Joseph Lewis Stackpole
* James Jackson Storrow
* Charles Folsom Walcott
* Samuel Wells
* Josiah Newell Willard

* Deceased

December, 1908



25¢-nick }
8-21-58 }
25¢ }
Nov 1997
Brattle Bookshop
+25

